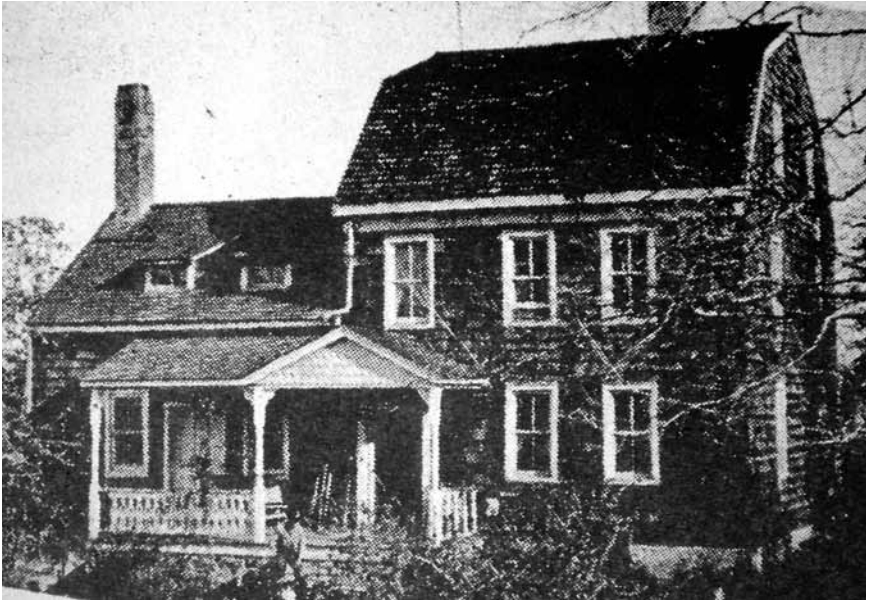


NORTH CASTLE HISTORY



Collections of Doris Finch Watson

**THE MARTIN HOUSE
RIVER HILLS, 1930s**

(Present-day 14 Mianus River Road)

THE NORTH CASTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 37 -- 2010

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SOME REMEMBRANCES FROM RICHARD MILLER, AN ORAL HISTORY

by Anne Hubbell French

In 1903 my parents and I moved from Banksville to this house to live with my maternal grandparents, the Martins. I was 6 years old. My father's father used to live up on Hobby Street (present-day Hickory Kingdom Road).



Collection of Doris Finch Watson

RIVER HILLS BEFORE THE ADDITIONS¹ Believed to have been built around 1790 by the Smith Family

When I was four and still living in Banksville, I watched my father build the chimney and plaster the walls of the new East Middle Patent School.² I remember that the old school was a wreck of a place. They tore it down. It was on the same side of the road as the new one, but closer to the corner, where the lilies are. After a year in Banksville's two-room school (Middle Patent School), I started at East Middle Patent School.

Mr. Chase, my first teacher, and his wife rented John Millmore's house at the sharp corner on East Middle Patent Road, about 1/3 of a mile north of St. Mary's Church. He walked from there every morning, rain or shine. He carried his lunch in a little basket. He had a cane. He always had a watch

¹ Maps in the collection of North Castle Town Historian Doris Finch Watson indicate "W. Downes" occupied the house in 1858, "Downs" (Downes) in 1867, and "R. Martin" in 1901. Family records indicate that Mr. Martin bought the house and 50 acres from one of Widow Smith's 11 children using his Civil War Pension. The Smith family is believed to have built the house around 1790.

² See North Castle History, Volume 10, 1983 and Volume 13, 1986.

chain across his vest and a derby hat. We had to march into school while Mr. Chase played his beautiful ivory flute, march around the room until we came to our own desks, and always try to step on the other fellow's shoes.



Collection of The Historical Society

After Mr. Chase retired, Miss Goodheart was the teacher. She left because she was crazy. She gave us 100 examples to do at night and half a book to read. Families asked to have her replaced, so she went to the little Stone Jug School in Bedford and eventually went out of her mind. She wouldn't let anyone come near her but Dan O'Brien, the contractor from Bedford.

EAST MIDDLE PATENT SCHOOL³

Delzora Grizay was the next teacher. She was a French woman who boarded here. She invited pestering and only lasted two years. Marion Bailey was the next teacher, just before Mrs. Lanfair. She boarded with Miss Hobby.⁴

Before going to school at 9:00 a.m., I had to feed the chickens and bring in the wood. The school schedule was spelling, reading, arithmetic, noon hour for lunch, history, physiology, language, and writing. You had fifteen minutes recess in the morning and the noon hour to eat lunch and play. School ended at 3:00 p.m. You walked yourself to school. Nobody got a ride.⁵

Inside the school there was not any lighting, or an American flag or a piano. Mrs. Lanfair brought in the piano. Different boys were assigned weekly to bring in the firewood for the stove in winter. There was zinc behind the stove to protect the walls. Bottles of coffee were hung on the

³ The East Middle Patent One-Room Schoolhouse is now part of The North Castle Historical Society's Educational Complex in Armonk.

⁴ Barbara Massi, a Trustee of The Historical Society, learned that Annie Kriline, age 26, who lived with the George W. Halls in the Daniel Smith house next door, was listed in the 1910 Federal census as the school teacher.

⁵ Children from Hickory Kingdom would come down cross lots (take a short cut).

wainscoting above the zinc and around 10:00 a.m. in winter the bottles would heat up and the corks would pop off meaning it was time for recess. There were no snow days since everybody walked.

The most children that came to the school were thirty. They had to put them in the cloakroom and everywhere else. One person was designated each day to raise and lower the flag outside. Two outhouses were directly behind the building. Old and young all played together at recess. If the well went dry⁶ then they would get water from Mr. Tallman's spring, a quarter mile north on Mianus River Road. We played tricks on the teacher such as little garter snakes in the teacher's drawer. If you were caught whispering or passing notes, you would have to stay after school. At Christmas I had to get up on the platform and say a little piece or something. I hated that.

In wintertime I slept up in the attic at home and after a big snow often woke up to find snow on my quilt.

We had a big long bobsled. When it was good sledding you could go from St. Mary's, down St. Mary's Church Road, and sometimes all the way around the corners to where the pond is now near Mianus River Road. No cars. All you had to worry about was a horse. We generally had a lookout. We would also sled down to Piping Brook from the Connecticut line on East Middle Patent Road.



Collection of Doris Finch Watson
Drawing by Peter Mathews

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, 1977

We did most of our ice-skating down on Rockefeller's place. They had a big ice pond down there. Dr. Dorvan owned it at that time. The Clarks were the superintendents looking after the place. Sometimes we would go skating all the way up the steep hill to Taconic Road at that first driveway on the other side of the road. There was a nice lake in there. If we were going skating we would walk up to St. Mary's where we would all start off. There were four or five Rickles, and a couple of Millmores. Then we

⁶ The hand pump was outside.

would go down to Dorvans⁷. There were four kids down there. We would walk over there, skate for hours using clamp-on skates, and then walk the two miles home.

After a snowstorm the roads in East Middle Patent were not rolled. Albert Hobby was road commissioner. His oxen would pull a sled to break the roads⁸. He always had two or three men with him, and when it would get too deep, they would get out and shovel.⁹

On a typical summer day you would have some chores to do ... rake the yard, bring in the wood for the wood stove, feed the chickens, and gather eggs. When you got your chores all done you would go visit your friends, do whatever you wanted to. We would go fishing down there to the River Hills. Some game club bought up the rights along the river and stocked it with trout. They had a watchman.¹⁰ We would wait for him to go by, then we would get a mess of trout and go home.¹¹

Memorial Day was a bigger celebration that July 4. My father and I would bike to Norwalk or Mt. Kisco for the parades. We would drive the wagon to Stamford to go to the Circus – a very long day. They used to have dances up in Bedford and different places, but there was none around here. Foxhunts would start on Long Ridge Road and would sometimes run right through our fields.¹²

We would trap anything ... muskrat, raccoon, skunk and hunt for squirrels and rabbits. There were no deer around then. There were bobcats up above Bedford, up on the Cross River Road. My trap line was through the swamp behind the springhouse and on up to Weils.¹³ It was a long way to school, and I had to get out early.¹⁴

⁷ The Dorvans lived on East Middle Patent Road in the last house on the left in New York. Later this property became part of the Rockefeller Estate.

⁸ for the sleighs.

⁹ Roads closer to Banksville and Armonk were packed down with plow horses or oxen pulling heavy wooden rollers.

¹⁰ Reportedly some watchmen could be bribed with a pint of whiskey.

¹¹ Perhaps the path along the river was a Native American fishing path.

¹² A 1928 map shows the East Middle Patent Schoolhouse as one of the starting points.

¹³ Hope's Farm Lane.

¹⁴ Richie asked for the tape recorder to be turned off while he told the story of finding a skunk in one of his traps. The teacher immediately sent him home from school because of the smell. He was so humiliated he never wanted to talk about it. He began the story, "I shouldn't tell you this. This is terrible."

We used to coon hunt up in there. One night three of us boys all had our coon dogs running coons. We sat down by a big old tree, and all of a sudden a bobcat that was up in the tree let out a screech, and we raised up high.

In August when the copperheads were shedding, we would go down to the rocks by the old dam¹⁵ and see how many we could catch using forked sticks and burlap bags. Then we would let them go. One afternoon we caught 24.

When I was a little boy there was no hospital in Mt. Kisco. Dr. Coopernail was the village doctor in Bedford and lived two houses south of the Presbyterian Church. He made house calls, but he took antiques. He stole one from my mother one time, and she lit into him. Doctor Andrews in Mt. Kisco would care for sick horses.

Everybody was a farmer then.¹⁶ We kept two cows in the stone basement under the shoe house next to the big rock. When we first moved here about 1900, the shoe house was getting kind of weak, and we could not play in it. Hay was never baled, just gathered in loose. We took our grain to the mill in Katonah. The mill on Millers Mill Road was then being used to grind up feldspar from Kinkel's Quarry.¹⁷

In fancy time, Finch's Store used to come around once a week with one of those wagons with a top. We would go to Mt. Kisco or to Adams Store in Bedford Hills. Larry Palmer sold meat from his wagon.¹⁸

Farmers in the Middle Patent tanned their animal hides using the tannic acid from the bark of the old hemlocks. In the winter, when there was no farming, they made shoe parts from that leather. In spring they would take

¹⁵ The old dam is all that remains of Isaac Sarles' sawmill, east southeast of the big meadow and just upstream of the little waterfall.

¹⁶ In 1900 Judge Bonsal's father counted 16 roadside barns, within a triangle formed by Millers' Mill, Mianus River and East Middle Patent Roads. The Martins grew oats, barley, rye, and potatoes.

¹⁷ Then called Quarry Road, it is now called East Middle Patent Road. During Rich's boyhood they were still taking feldspar and blocks of rose quartz from the Hobby Quarry, now in the Mianus River Gorge Preserve, by wagon to Bedford Station, now Bedford Hills.

¹⁸ The quality of the meat was questionable, as was the weighing scale. Judge Bonsal's mother noticed the scale had no needle. Reportedly, Mr. Palmer replied, "Why Mrs. Bonsal, you're the first woman who has ever noticed that."

the parts over to the shoe factory by wagon. The factory is now a house at the intersection of Old Long Ridge Road and Long Ridge at the north end of the old village.¹⁹

A Mr. Brown came and cleaned out the whole woods. He paid every neighbor for the timber rights to their woods on the east side of Mianus River/East Middle Patent Roads.

This cutting extended from Albert Hobby's southern border, near the Bedford line, down to the Connecticut line²⁰. They took out anything big enough to saw. My grandfather held out and held out and then he finally gave in, but he saved some.²¹

My mother saw The Leatherman²² out here at the end of the lane. He was probably coming over from the shoe factory on Long Ridge Road.



F. W. Moore
Collection of The Historical Society
THE LEATHERMAN, 1888

Tim the Hermit lived in a stone hut that he built against a boulder²³. He would come by to get food. Another Hermit was Munshank. He lived

¹⁹ This deserted farm road was referred to as the Cobblers' Road. By turning right in the Big Meadow down from River Hills, the road joined with the most southerly fire trail in Mianus River Gorge, followed the drift way around the swamp that led to Isaac Sarles sawmill and then straight east to the reservoir. Before the reservoir drowned the River in 1954, the Cobblers' Road went east to Long Ridge.

²⁰ Herman "Boots" Steeger said that when he was young, after World War I, he could stand on the back porch of Finch's County Store in Banksville and see a barn on Percy Elliott's pig farm on East Middle Patent Road. That barn is now the original house in the Hope's Farm Road subdivision.

²¹ A 1926 aerial photograph of the Mianus Valley shows the dark denser forest following the Martin boundary, extending westward toward the road – the only property along the east side of the Mianus River/East Middle Patent Roads where the denser forest extends to the west, where Mr. Martin stopped Mr. Brown. After the Civil War charcoal was made for sale in New York City. Evidence of the burn piles exists on the Castlebrook acres off East Middle Patent Road owned by the Mianus River Gorge Preserve.

²² See North Castle History, 2004, Volume 31.

²³ The remains of the hut were visible during the summer of 2010 lying between 14 Mianus River Road and the Daniel Smith house just south of the driveway to 16 Mianus River Road. Tim was a Civil War veteran.

in a shanty for years on the right side of the first sharp corner north of St. Mary's Church on East Middle Patent Road.

Bill Hall was a character. He did all kinds of things. He sold wood, and hickory hoop poles to the factory down in Stamford. They dried them and split them for barrel hoops. His wife Jenny always went to town with us. They would buy eggs and anything they could, reasonably, then she would go to town every week to peddle them. Bill Hall put up a 'No Trespassing' sign on a maple tree that was right in front of Will Tallman's door. Tallman would pull the sign down, and Hall would put it back up. Tallman would load his gun with screws and everything and take pot shots at Hall and the sign.²⁴

One time Will Tallman's mother Cornelia ran up the road to our house, clutching Will's gun. It resembled a blunderbuss. She begged my grandmother to hide the gun from her son for he fully intended to murder his uncle. My grandmother took it up to our attic and hid it. It was never seen again.

Will Tallman and Bill Hall just didn't like each other²⁵. My grandfather didn't like Bill Hall either. He called him "a rattlesnake" because he hired someone to go use his name and take his place in the Civil War. My grandfather fought in the Civil War. He'd never talk about it.



The William and Jessie Tallman house stood on the west side of Mianus River Road.

The house was torn down in 1947 by the Highway Department so that the road could be widened. This is a copy of the only known photograph of the house.

Collection of Doris Finch Watson

THE TALLMAN HOUSE²⁶

²⁴ George W. Hall lived in the Daniel Smith Half House. Jenny was his second wife.

²⁵ Today, Will Tallman and Bill Hall lie side by side in the Middle Patent Rural Cemetery at the intersection of Middle Patent and Bedford-Banksville Roads.

²⁶ Will Tallman and Bill Hall were relatives. Tallman lived in, or next to, John Rich's shoe shop. Tallman was a cooper and a mason who made barrels of oak, beech, and hickory.

We never had electricity in the house. The old well, on the north side of the house always would go dry. Water was brought into the house by a garden hose through the kitchen window from the spring below the barn, 150 yards east of the house. A Model T engine ran the pump in the stone springhouse.

Anne, when your parents bought this place from us they sure fancied it up ... paint, shutters, and electricity in every room.

But, they were good neighbors and real people.²⁷



Welling Collection of The North Castle Historical Society

TWO VIEWS OF RIVER HILLS, 1976

²⁷ Dorothy and William Bradford Hubbell, Anne's parents, bought River Hills from Rich's father, 55 acres for \$25,000. The senior Mr. Miller toured the property with Mrs. Hubbell, showed her the 17 varieties of apple trees growing on the farm and explained the best use for each – sweet or hard cider, pies, baking, applesauce, jelly, keeping for winter, etc. In 1935 they bought Bill Hall's little house and 59-acre farm for \$14,500 from his adopted son, Jim Sullivan. Also in 1935 the Hubbells added two acres to the farm when they bought Will Tallman's house for \$2,500. When Anne was 5, in 1947, the highway department tore down the house so the road could be widened.

Granddaughter Dana (Mrs. James Zygmont) sent a copy of this photograph of her Grandfather. It was taken in November 1983 when he was 87 years of age. He was born June 9, 1896. She related that he was a very special man who had an impact on many people. He passed away in early 1990. Dana said that her Grandfather was rarely photographed without his hat.



Collection of Dana Zygmont

RICHARD "RICHIE" MILLER

Richard Miller lived in the eastern district of North Castle at River Hills, 14 Mianus River Road, from 1903 until 1933. Anne lived there from 1942 until 1985 and now lives in Norwich, Vermont. She recorded this interview with Richard Miller at River Hills on June 22, 1985. Her mother Dorothy Hubbell²⁸, who lived on the land from 1932 until 1995 and Judge Dudley Bonsal of St. Mary's Church Road, who lived in the neighborhood from 1900 until 1990, can also be heard on the tape.

²⁸ The original meeting to discuss forming an historical society was held at River Hills. On May 10, 1971 an Incorporation Meeting was held at the home of Doris Finch Watson at which time an "Application for Incorporation of The North Castle Historical Society" was signed by seven Incorporators: Ronald R. Atkins, R. Eugene Curry, Dorothy T. Hubbell, Sally Spencer Hurwitz, Hon. James D. Hopkins, Richard N. Lander, and Doris Finch Watson. See North Castle History, Volume 25, 1998.

MILLER HOUSE IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

by Sharon Tomback



George Washington being appointed Commander in Chief¹

The Continental Congress commissioned George Washington Commander in Chief of the Continental Army on June 19, 1775. He was selected over other candidates based on his previous military experience and the hope that a leader from Virginia could help unite the colonies. After eight years of war, Washington resigned his commission as Commander in Chief on December 23, 1783.²

George Washington was in the Miller House on three occasions: in 1776 when the Battle of White Plains was fought, in 1778 during which the combined army spent several months in North Castle; and in 1781 when the French joined American forces and began the march to Yorktown, Virginia. In 1778 Washington wrote a letter to his friend Thomas Nelson, Jr. reflecting on his time in the area.

Camp, at White Plains, 20th August 1778

It is not a little pleasing nor less wonderful to contemplate, that after two years maneuvering and undergoing the strangest vicissitudes that perhaps ever attended any one contest since the creation, both armies are brought back to the very point they set out from, and that the offending party, at the

¹ Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, hand-colored lithograph, Currier & Ives, about 1876

² <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/commission.html>

beginning, is now reduced to the use of the spade and pickaxe for defense. The hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all this that he must be worse than an infidel who lacks faith and more than wicked that has not gratitude enough to acknowledge his obligations. But it will be time enough for me to turn preacher when my present appointment ceases; and therefore I shall add no more on the doctrine of Providence³.



Drawing by Harold J. Schaller, 1986
Collections of The North Castle Historical Society

Elijah Miller House – Washington’s Headquarters
Present-day 140 Virginia Road, North White Plains, New York

John Miller probably built the Miller house about 1738. Son Elijah married Annatjie (Annetjie, Anne, Ann) Fisher. About 1770 they moved into the house. The west end of the Miller House was built about this time and included a new parlor with corner fireplace, a porch, a bedroom with fireplace on the ground floor, and two bedrooms on the second floor. Anne Miller lived in the house until her death in 1819. A daughter, Sarah Miller Cornell, lived in the house until her death in 1838.⁴

The Last Will of Elijah Miller, which proves the names of his wife and children, is recorded on page 438 of the Abstracts of Wills on File in the Surrogate’s Office, City of New York, Vol. XIII.

“In the name of God, Amen, the 21st day of July, 1776. I, Elijah Miller, of North Castle, Westchester County, yeoman. It is my will that my dearly beloved wife Ann, Anthony Miller and Nicholas Fisher, be my executors.

³ Historic White Plains, by John Rosch, White Plains, 1939.

⁴ See Historical Site Tour of North Castle by Richard N. Lander, Doris Finch Watson, Irene Sandford and Thomas R. Parker, 1976.

My wife to have LL200, as her third⁵ out of my estate after the whole is sold, except the best bed, which I give my wife. To my daughter Sarah, LL80. The remainder of my estate to be divided between the rest of my children, viz.: John, James, Elijah, Martha, Abraham, and Zephorah, the boys to have a double portion. Witnesses, James Miller, Samuel Brewer, Gilbert Miller, of North Castle, yeoman. Proved, Westchester County, March 14, 1785. Administration granted to Nicholas Fisher, New York, March 19, 1785.”⁶



**Miller Tombstones in the Old Colonial Presbyterian Churchyard,
White Plains, New York⁷**

*In Memory of John the son of Elijah & Ann Miller.
He died December 22, 1776. Aged 20 Years, 8 Months and 18 Days*

*In Memory of Elijah Miller who died August 21st, A.D. 1776.
Aged 48 Years, 3 Months and 13 Days.*

*In Memory of Elijah the son of Elijah & Ann Miller.
He died December 22, 1776. Aged 16 Years, 1 Month and 3 Days.*

Family Testimony Regarding Miller House and George Washington

In her Will, Ann Miller makes a definite mention of a table and chair used by Washington, and there is something impressively irrefutable in the old document. A letter written to “The Daily Argus” by Mrs. Henrietta Oakley, 37 Robertson Avenue, White Plains, dated October 10th, 1916, states that:

⁵ indicating Elijah Miller’s Estate was valued at more than 600 British Pounds.

⁶ Elijah Miller died on August 21, 1776, just one month after making his Will. His Will was proved on March 14, 1785.

⁷ Op. Cit.: John Rosch. On October 27, 1775, Elijah Miller, the father, was appointed Adjutant of a Westchester County Regiment under Colonel Samuel Drake. He died from wounds received at Hurlgate. The two sons died of disease contracted in camp.

*Anne Miller died on June 13th, 1819, aged 92 years. She willed the chair and table to her son, James Miller, my grandfather. James Miller left the chair and table to John Miller, my uncle. He willed them to his niece Henrietta Miller in 1862. I still have these as well as the record book of visitors, which book contains 3,560 names. This Will by which these articles came to me is on record in the Surrogate's office of this County. I am now eighty-three years of age and was born in the house named and lived there for thirty years.*⁸

On November 6, 1845 Zipporah (a daughter of Elijah and Ann Miller) testified that their house served as quarters for Washington's officers including Maj. Gen. Charles Lee, Col. Alexander McDougall and Gen. Horatio Gates. She recalled that one night her mother "resigned" her own bed to General Washington.⁹

She said, "General Lee's Head-quarters were at my mother's (Annatie Miller's) a day or two before the battle of White Plains, and that morning or the day before he advised us to move back, observing: 'If you stay here you'll have a very troublesome time.' We started in the morning in an ox cart with beds &c., horses &c., and some of our furniture for North Castle, where we remained eight or ten days, stopping not long after we left home upon a high hill, where we saw the fight on Chatterton Hill. When we returned our waggon (sic) and chairs were broken, and almost everything about the house destroyed".¹⁰

Major General Charles Lee¹¹ - 2nd in Command Continental Army

The Continental Congress commissioned Charles Lee Major General in the Continental Army on June 17, 1775.¹² He was Second in Command

⁸ Op. Cit.: John Rosch

⁹ The McDonald Papers, edited by William S. Hadaway, Westchester County Historical Society, Book II pages 263-265. Mr. MacDonald spelled his name with an "a" which was dropped when the two edited volumes were published. Copies of the original, hand-written interviews are in the possession of Bedford, New York Town Historian John Stockbridge. Special appreciation is extended to John, his assistant Christina Rae and to Dick Schmidt of the Bedford Hills Historical Society for their many kindnesses in making the copies available.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ http://www.carolana.com/NC/Revolution/continental_army_charles_lee.html.

¹² As a consequence of having the only existing Continental army (16,000 men) Artemas Ward was commissioned first Major General, but he resigned in early 1776 leaving Charles Lee second in command of the Continental Army to George Washington. <http://biography.yourdictionary.com/charles-lee>.

to George Washington. A closer look at the Second in Command of the Continental Army reveals an interesting character.

Charles Lee was said to be the foremost military mind in the colonies. He was an experienced British officer educated in Europe. He headquartered at the Miller House commanding from 4,000 to 11,000 troops, depending on the various historians' estimates, from just before the Battle of White Plains on October 28 until mid-November 1776.



Major General Charles Lee¹³

The Battle of White Plains was basically a battle for control of Chatterton's Hill. On October 28, 1776 British General William Howe took Chatterton's Hill with a force of 4,000 British and Hessian soldiers. Washington retreated north to a more tenable position, and when the British advanced on November 1, they found the American lines empty. Brig. Gen. Joseph Spencer's Division (New England), Col. John Hazlet's Delaware Regiment, Maj. Gen. Alexander McDougall's¹⁴ 1st New York, Col. Rudolphus Ritzema's¹⁵ 3rd New York, Col. William Smallwood's Maryland Regiment, Col. Charles Webb's Connecticut Regiment, Col. Eleazer Brook's New York militia and Col. Morris Graham's¹⁶ Massachusetts militia had moved into the North Castle hills.¹⁷

John MacDonald interviewed Abraham Miller, son of Elijah and Annatjie (Ann) Miller, and Zipporah's brother, on September 11, 1845. "When the British some days after the battle of White Plains advanced with a strong force to reconnoiter or attack our army, they marched along the Bronx and ascended Hatfield Hill. The American artillery fired upon them from Miller's Hill by my house (the Elijah Miller House) as they

¹³ http://www.generalatomic.com/AmericanHistory/washingtons_retreat.html.

¹⁴ Court-martialed, 1782. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_McDougall.

¹⁵ Ritzema later deserted to the British Army.

¹⁶ Court-martialed for cowardice during the Battle of White Plains. Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society, vol. 46, no. 2 (Spring 1970): 38-39

¹⁷ <http://www.britishbattles.com/white-plains.htm>

were ascending. Notwithstanding, they advanced to the crest of the hill, a little north of Joseph Hatfield's and fired upon our troops, but soon after retreated suddenly. They lost several horses and one man – an artilleryman was torn in pieces and lost his head by a twelve-pound shot. I saw the whole of this affair.”¹⁸

Abraham Davis¹⁹ married Zipporah (Zephorah) Miller, daughter of Elijah and Annatjie (Ann) Miller. He stated to John MacDonald on November 6, 1845, “When the British after the battle of White Plains advanced to Travis's (afterwards Hatfields) Hill, it is said that nine Hessians were killed by one cannon shot. I think that on this occasion they must have advanced on the west side of the Bronx – but am not certain.”

On November 4, 1776, a few days after the Battle of White Plains, the British began a return march to Manhattan. Shortly thereafter Washington chose to divide his army, leading about 2,500 men, and leaving a larger force of some 11,000²⁰ men in North Castle under the command of Charles Lee, who was responsible for halting any British advance into New England.

On November 10, 1776 Washington wrote to Lee at the Miller House:

Head Quarters, Near the White Plains, November 10, 1776. Sir: The late Movement of the Enemy, and the probability of their having designs upon the Jerseys rendering it necessary to throw a body of Troops over the North River²¹, I shall immediately follow, and the command of the Army which remains after General Heath's division marches to Peekskill devolving upon you, I have to request

That you will be particularly attentive that all the intrenching and other Tools, (excepting those in immediate use) be got together, and delivered to the Quarter Master General, or Major Reed, who heretofore has been intrusted with them.

That you will direct the commanding Officer of Artillery, to exert himself, in having the Army well Supplied, with Musket Cartridges; for this purpose, a convenient place, at a distance, should be fixed on, that the business may go on uninterrupted.

¹⁸ Hand-written copies of John MacDonald Interviews, Book II, page 136.

¹⁹ For some years a portion of the present-day Valhalla area was known as Davis Brook and the Miller property bordered the Davis property.

²⁰ <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1283.html>

²¹ an alternate name for the southernmost portion of the Hudson River.

That no Troops, who have been furnished with Arms, Accoutrements, or Camp utensils, be suffered to depart the Camp, before they have delivered them, either to the Commissary of Stores, or the Quarter Master General, (or his Assistant), as the case may be, taking receipts therefore, in exoneration of those which they have passed. In a particular manner, let the tents be taken care of, and committed to the Quarter Master General's care...

In case of your removal from hence, I submit to the consideration of Yourself and the General Officers with you, the propriety of destroying the Hay, to prevent the Enemy from reaping the benefit of it.

You will consider the post at Croton's or Pine's bridge, as under your immediate care, as also that lately occupied by Genl. Parsons, and the other at Wrights Mill²²; the first, I am taught to believe, is of consequence, the other two can be of little use, while the Enemy hover about the North River, and upon our right flank

If the Enemy should remove the whole, or the greatest part of their force, to the West side of Hudson's River, I have no doubt of your following, with all possible dispatch, leaving the Militia and Invalids to cover the Frontiers of Connecticut &c. in case of need.

On his way to join Washington, Lee was captured on December 13, 1776 at White's Tavern in Basking Ridge, New Jersey. He was held a prisoner for the next 16 months and did not rejoin his soldiers until May 1778. While his soldiers wintered the hardships at Valley Forge, Lee spent the winter in New York City lodgings with his servant and dogs. During that time he authored the infamous "Mr. Lee's Plan" offering ways to defeat the Continental Army. The "Plan" only became public 82 years later.²³

"I have kept so much bad company ..."

As a result of disobeying orders during the Battle of Monmouth, New Jersey, Lee was court-martialed and judged guilty in August 1778.²⁴ The Continental Congress later dismissed him from the army. Lee's Will

²² Reuben Wright's Mill. A monument stands on the west side of present-day Route 22 one-half mile north of Old Orchard Street. See [Historical Site Tour of North Castle](#), by Richard N. Lander, Doris Finch Watson, Irene Sandford, and Thomas R. Parker, 1976.

²³ <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1283.html>. In 1858 a document titled "Mr. Lee's Plan, 29th March 1777" was discovered; it advised Howe of ways to defeat the Continental Army. Some historians have argued that Lee's plan was an attempt to mislead the British, but in light of his later activities his loyalty remains in question.

²⁴ During which time the American Army was headquartered and encamped in and around Miller House, North Castle and White Plains.

stipulated that he not be buried in a churchyard. “I have kept so much bad company when living that I do not choose to continue it when dead.”²⁵

Lee’s Peculiar Humor

Zipporah Miller Davis related the following story about Charles Lee. “My eldest sister, Sarah Mott²⁶, had spun and woven a set of home linen damask bed curtains, chequered blue and white, which we left behind for General Lee. Mrs. Mott returned either with or before us to recover her curtains and found them in the hands of General Lee’s tailor who was making a cloak for him, and in the very act of cutting up the curtains for lining. Both tailor and general were very unwilling to give up the curtains at first, but Mrs. Mott at length regained possession of them”.²⁷

Westchester County Historical Society records describe an incident at Miller House while Lee was there. His dinner was served at a time when Washington and his staff were there. After they had finished eating, scarcely anything remained ... As soon as his guests had departed, Lee told his aides, ‘You must look me out another place, for if I remain here, Washington and his hungry puppies will eat me up.’ He ordered a servant to write in large letters with chalk on the front door, ‘No victuals dressed here today.’ The same men later read the chalk advertisement on Mrs. Miller’s front door, and had a hearty laugh at this “sample of uncourtliness in a man whose eccentricities were known to all.”

“The late General Philip Van Courtland used to tell a story of General Lee, which exhibited, at the same time, the peculiar humor of the man and the poverty of his wardrobe. ‘It was at this time,’ said Van Courtland, ‘currently reported and believed in the American camp, that Lee’s stock of shirts was reduced to three, and these were in a state of such dilapidation that he himself bestowed upon them the appropriate names of Tag, Rag and Bobtail.” The story goes that when Lee asked for ‘Tag’, he was reminded that he was wearing it. “Let me have Rag, then. Rag is in the wash, Sir. Well then, bring along Bobtail!”²⁸

²⁵ <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1117.html>

²⁶ According to family genealogy Sarah Miller Mott married Samuel Cornell as her second husband. She lived at Miller House until 1838 when she died at 84 years of age.

²⁷ Op. Cit. MacDonald Interviews. Book II, pages 263-265, an interview conducted November 6, 1845 with Zipporah Davis.

²⁸ Op. Cit.: McDonald Papers.

Charles Lee and George Washington - Temperamentally Opposites

Dr. James Thacher wrote that “General Lee was a man of unbounded personal ambition.”²⁹ Author Thomas J. Fleming wrote, “From the vantage of the comfortable historical privilege of hindsight, it is easy to say that a clash between Charles Lee and George Washington was inevitable. Temperamentally they were opposites. Washington made a habit of saying as little as possible; he had no pretensions to being either an intellectual or a military genius. Lee never stopped talking and considered himself—with some justification—both a military and a political theorist of the first rank.

Though he could relax with intimates, Washington, like most conservatives, valued dignity and decorum. Lee valued neither. His uniform was invariably slovenly, and his conversation was sprinkled with phrases that made gentlemen wince and ladies blush. His constant company was a pack of dogs who (sic) shared his table, his bed, and his headquarters.



Charles Lee with Small Dog³⁰

Compounding these idiosyncrasies was an astonishing physical ugliness. He was thin and reedy, and his hands and feet were unusually small. His face was lean, dark, and bony, with an under slung jaw and a nose so long that for a time he was nicknamed Naso.”³¹

²⁹ Thacher, MD, James. Military Journal, during the American Revolutionary War from 1776 to 1783, published by Richardson and Lord, Boston, 1823.

³⁰ 18th century engraving by A. H. Ritchie after a caricature by Barham Rushbrooke, The Emmet Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

³¹ American Heritage Magazine, April 1968, Volume 19, “The ‘Military Grimes’ of Charles Lee” by Thomas J. Fleming. Naso referred to his large nose.

A fellow officer, Thaddeus Kosciusko, drew this caricature. The Continental Congress commissioned him Colonel of Engineers in 1776. His drawing pokes fun at Lee's desire to be Commander in Chief by showing Lee stuffed in a large boot. His nose is drawn in exaggerated proportion.

A very large over-boot, reportedly worn by Washington, is among the artifacts on display at the Miller House. One wonders whether Kosciusko saw the boots on Gen. Washington and got the idea for the drawing.



Maj. Gen. Charles Lee Caricature³²

On November 1, 1776 a battle occurred on Miller Hill.³³ This hill is part of the North Castle hills where Charles Lee had thought the American defensive position should have been instead of Chatterton's Hill.

**Miller Hill Park - The Only Revolutionary War Battle Site
in Westchester County Still in its Natural Setting**

The Town of North Castle placed a standing metal marker at the field in 1976. The marker reads: "Miller Hill - Shots fired from this hill, Nov. 4, 1776, by Col. John Glover's troops ended Battle of White Plains and turned tide of Revolution."³⁴ A small marker under a tree identifies the "Liberty Tree" planted to commemorate the Bicentennial 1776-1976. The Congressional plaque states, "October 31; 1776 - Following the engagement on Chatterton Hill Washington's army retired to new lines extending east from this point. These earthworks protected the right wing of Washington's army. Erected by Act of Congress May 18, 1926."

³² From a drawing by Kosciusko (i.e., Kosciuszko). Original in the Peters Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

³³ Miller Hill is a high distance behind and above Miller House.

³⁴ Most sources report November 1, 1776.



Photograph by Lucas Remedios

Miller Hill Park Revolutionary War Battle Site

Westchester County Parks Department records indicate that Miller Hill Park is the only Revolutionary War battle site in Westchester County still in its natural setting.

The Elijah Miller House - Washington's Headquarters Museum

The Miller House was accepted for the National Register of Historic Places on September 29, 1976; added to the New York State Register of Historic Places on June 26, 1980; and listed on the Westchester County Inventory of Historic Places on January 5, 1988.

The small Rhode Island style farmhouse originally was surrounded by a farm tract of some 600 acres, acquired by the Miller family in the colonial period. John Miller probably built the house about 1738. He had eight children and one of his sons, Elijah (born 1728), married a near neighbor, Ann Miller.



Collections of The North Castle Historical Society
1776 Photograph

The Elijah Miller House/Washington's Headquarters

Elijah and Ann Fisher Miller first lived in a house on a hill above her parents' home. The Miller family grew to include seven children. About 1770 they moved into the house known for more than 225 years as the Elijah Miller House/Washington's Headquarters.

WATERSHED OF WAMPUS RIVER NEAR ARMONK TO BE PROPERLY PROTECTED FROM NUISANCES

Reprinted from New-York Tribune, Sunday, April 26, 1903¹

**PART II
FOURTEEN PAGES.**

New-York Tribune.

**SUNDAY,
APRIL 26, 1903.**

TO MAKE DRINKING WATER IN THE BRONX PURER.

WATERSHED OF WAMPUS RIVER NEAR ARMONK TO BE PROPERLY PROTECTED FROM NUISANCES.

THE CHURCH OF THE WAMPUS RIVER.

THE HOUSE ON WAMPUS RIVER.

**Le Boutillier Brothers
LINGERIE.**

WOMEN'S SHORT WAISTS.

98 - '7.85

**Le Boutillier Brothers
West Twenty-third Street.**

To Make Drinking Water in the Bronx Purer

Until recently there has been no sanitary patrol of the watersheds from which the supply for Manhattan and The Bronx is drawn, and the bacteriological examinations of samples taken from the various sources of supply have been made at the Mount Prospect laboratory in Brooklyn, the water being expressed to that point for the purpose. Besides, there have never been any sanitary maps of the watersheds showing the possible sources of pollution and indicating those that a proper consideration of the health of the city requires inspection of at stated intervals. No records

¹ <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030214/1903-04-26/ed-1/seq-15/>. Image and text provided by the Library of Congress, Washington, DC. The New-York Tribune was published from 1866 until 1924 in New York, New York.

have been kept of nuisances known to exist or of the measures taken for their abatement.

Commissioner Robert Grier Monroe, when he began the reorganization of the Department of Water Supply, at the beginning of this year, undertook to provide for these palpable deficiencies. He is having constructed at Katonah a laboratory for the analysis of water taken from the various streams and ponds in the Croton Valley. This laboratory is almost finished and will soon be in use.

Assistant Engineer F. K. Betts has opened headquarters at Katonah for a force of four sanitary inspectors who will thoroughly patrol the watershed and report for record and for action, if necessary, the existence of any nuisances. These reports will be carefully noted, and maps made by Mr. Betts and his assistants will facilitate the abatement of the nuisances. A special study of the effect on the stored supply of aquatic vegetation will also be made.

In the Brooklyn supply, where the ponds have been patrolled for several years, the analysis of samples has always been conducted at the Mount Prospect laboratory.

The efficiency of the present administration in dealing with water supply problems is perhaps most apparent in the determination to clear nuisances at the earliest possible moment from the Watershed of the Wampus River, which has been contributing water to the Kensico Reservoir for about nine years. This ridding of the watershed of nuisances will involve an expenditure of from \$1,000,000 to \$1,500,000.

Dam and Tunnel completed about 1894

More than fifteen years ago the city of New York began the construction of a dam across the Wampus River, in Westchester County, near the Connecticut boundary. The manufacturers along the Byram River, in Connecticut, into which the Wampus flowed, secured an injunction against the city, and the work was delayed. In November 1891 this injunction was dissolved, and the work was resumed. The dam and a tunnel under the hill to convey its waters to the conduit in the valley of the Bronx, and thence to Kensico Lake, the storage reservoir, were completed about 1894. Since then the water from the Wampus has mingled with that of the upper Bronx in the Harlem aqueduct and has been served to the people of Bronx Borough. The city had

appropriated money, however, for various purposes, until the debt limit was reached, and nothing was available to clear the watershed of the Wampus of various buildings, burial grounds and other features of the valley, which menace the health of the portions of the city to which this water is sent.

Copious Springs in Village of Armonk

Within a few rods of the stream in many areas, and within a few feet in others, are barns and barnyards, hotels, poultry yards and churchyards. In the village of Armonk, hard by the river, is an old churchyard where for sixty years most of the dead of the vicinity have been buried. There have been several burials there within the last year, and there is as yet nothing to prevent others in the future. This cemetery is situated on ground beneath which flowed formerly the waters of half a dozen copious springs that emptied directly into the river. These springs were filled with earth within the last few years by the old colored sexton, who died a year ago and is himself buried within forty feet of the bank and it is asserted that their waters still arise from the gravel beneath the river bed. The hillsides and the slope at their foot are covered with the houses of the village, which is one of the oldest in Westchester and abounds with cesspools and surface drains.

The stakes for the original survey of a zone along the Wampus and its tributaries for the purpose of abolishing nuisances had rotted away when money for carrying the plan into execution lately became available. The people, chiefly farmers, whose lands are within this zone, had almost forgotten the old survey when a new surveying party came along. They ran the line closer to the stream than the original surveyors had laid it. Then the valley farmers and villagers were told that it was time to move. Notice was formally given that an application for condemnation of their holdings was pending in the courts, and that they must give up their homes. Later they heard that a commission had been appointed to appraise their buildings and lands. The commissioners, Maurice Dillon, of Port Chester; M. J. Tierney, of New Rochelle, and Howard Townsend of New York at once got to work, and during the last few weeks have been bearing testimony in this city as to the value of the land to be acquired.

Wampus Valley

The Wampus Valley is one of the most picturesque, fertile and longest inhabited of the many in Westchester County. The rock ribbed

hills that hedge it in are great masses of limestone and gneiss, with numerous extensive dikes of granite and marble, and at their feet are thousands of springs which flow with sparkling water the year round. The valley abounds in swales and bogs, from which the cool water bubbles in great volume, and, beside, there is a great accumulation of surface water from the hillsides as results even of summer showers. The melting snows and heavier rains of the early spring swell the Wampus, which in summer is only a brook, to the proportions of a river.

Almost at the edge of the Wampus and its tributaries, over a territory of about five square miles, stand all sorts of buildings and outhouses. There are graveyards so near that when the waters are high a newly made grave fills almost to the brink. Some of the dead in one of these have been buried with the coffins wound in straw because of the water in the graves. The earth there seems thoroughly saturated with water.



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. STEPHENS AT ARMONK
Scheduled for Removal



THE OLDER PART OF THE CHURCHYARD AT ARMONK
It is perilously near the water supply.

Village of Armonk

Armonk is a quaint old village on the west bank of the Wampus. Its population is only about five hundred, but the village has been in existence since long before the Revolution. Buildings have been erected there to the margin of the brook. Half a dozen buildings in the village proper are to be wiped out, and farmhouses and barns, which swell the total number of structures to be demolished to nearly one hundred, are scattered about St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, which was erected in the early (eighteen) forties and stands as near the Wampus as any other building in Armonk. Its churchyard, containing about four hundred and fifty graves, borders on the brook. Both, it is said, are to go, but the present condemnation proceedings do not include them. The line of the second survey passes just outside the church building, but takes the carriage sheds adjoining. The older survey, however, marked for condemnation both the church and churchyard entire and considerations of health seem to demand that the whole churchyard property should go. The cemetery for the last sixty years has been in use. Among the other buildings to be razed is the old Brookside Hotel at Armonk, a barbershop, a wheelwright's shop and several cottages.



THE HAMLET OF WAMPUS MILLS
It will be entirely wiped out of existence.

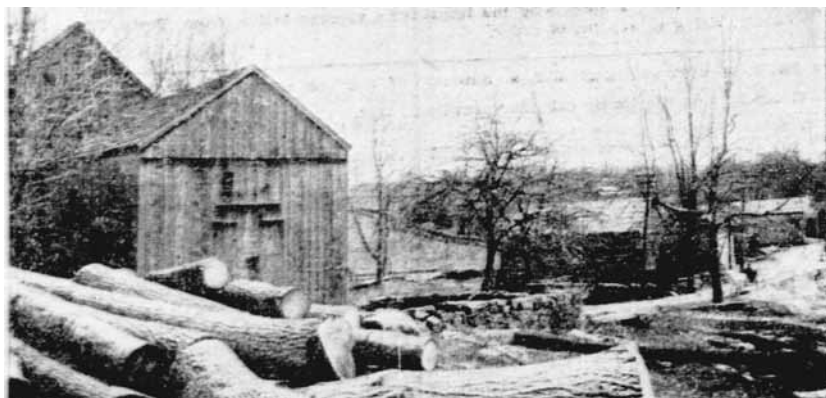
Wampus Mills

Much as Armonk will be changed by the condemnation proceedings, the old hamlet known as Mills, or Wampus Mills, a mile further up the valley, will suffer more. The houses, save a single residence high up the bluff, are already deserted. The old Mills Church², abandoned as a place of worship many years ago, and afterward used as a country store, is in the last stages of decay, and nearly all the other buildings on both sides of the highway

² Carpenter's Store. See North Castle History, Volume 7, 1980.

are tumbling down. The place is a melancholy ruin for it has not now a solitary inhabitant. It will pass away altogether with the cleaning up of the valley.

Just above Wampus Mills is the old millpond, and at the foot of a flume about 150 feet long, low down in the hollow, stand a gristmill and a sawmill in a fair state of repair. Both are still in use, but modern methods of flour production have for many years confined the operations of the former to grinding of feed and cornmeal. The gristmill has stood for more than a century, and I. F. Knowlton, its owner, says it has been grinding ever since it was built. The sawmill is of more recent construction. Both will go, and the old millpond will be exclusively the property of New York City, but the boys and girls of Armonk will probably skate on its ice as before.



THE OLD HALLECK BARN

Major Andre is said to have been imprisoned there for a time.³

Just above the mills, on the hillside, is the old Halleck barn. Tradition says Major Andre, the British spy, was imprisoned in the building the first night after his capture near North Tarrytown. The facts, according to local histories, come near justifying this assertion. The luckless officer was imprisoned in the Halleck barn, which stood on the same site, and was similar in form and construction to that of the present. The building, however, was rebuilt, according to Mr. Knowlton, about thirty years ago, and contains some of the rafters and other timbers of the original structure.

³ Research has proven that the Spy, British Maj. John Andre, was held at this location. The site at present-day NYS Route 128 and High Street in Armonk is marked with information plaques. See North Castle History, Volume 32, 2005.

One of the peculiarities of the survey is that Mr. Knowlton's farmhouse stands nearly twice as far from the river as his barn, but, owing to the running of arbitrarily straight lines by the surveyors, the house is to be condemned and the barn is to remain. As the latter is within about one hundred feet of the brook, it seems to one who may have occasion to drink Wampus water as if a new survey would be conducive to his comfort and, possibly, to his health.⁴

The nearest railway station is about eight miles from Armonk, the country about which is the prettiest in the county. The old dairy farms have been generally devoted in recent years to fruit and poultry raising.

One of the pathetic incidents of the hearing by the condemnation commission was the story of William Searles, a farmer residing near Armonk. Mr. Searles said his age was sixty, and that he has reared a family of thirteen children on his little thirty-acre farm. Mr. Searles wept as he told the commissioners that the farm had descended to him from his great-great-grandfather, who was a Revolutionary soldier, and that on account of its associations he was loathe to leave it. It is so situated that its buildings are doomed, however, for the security of the health of New Yorkers.

Editors' Note

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and Cemetery escaped destruction. The Hamlet of Wampus Mills was not spared.

For additional information, refer to previous articles appearing in North Castle History issues, footnoted in this article.

⁴ See North Castle History, Volume 7, 1980, page 20.

REMEMBERING LINDSAY H. “PETE” WELLING

Lindsay H. ‘Pete’ Welling passed away at the age of 89 years on November 30, 2010. He had been ill for some time.

Pete was born in New York City on December 26, 1920. He grew up in Scarsdale and attended Westminster School in Simsbury, Connecticut.

In 1942, Pete joined the United States Navy and upon graduating from flight school was accepted into the U.S. Marine Corps. He served in World War II with the VMR353 squadron, earning battle stars for Iwo Jima and Okinawa. While staying in the Reserves, he served in Korea with the Headquarters Squadron of the 1st Marine Air Wing. He was honorably discharged from the U.S. Marine Corps as a Major.

After World War II, Pete joined American Airlines. His 35-year career spanned the golden years of aviation from the DC3 to the 747. He retired in 1980, as a senior Captain qualified on the 747.

He married Claudia Cameron Kissick in 1960, and they moved to Armonk where they raised their three children. He enjoyed many hobbies, including coin and stamp collecting, golf and photography.

He paired his talent for photography with a love of history. He served as photographer par excellence and took many photographs for The North Castle Historical Society. He was a charter member of The North Castle Historical Society, and served as President 1974, 1975, and 1976¹. Pete donated hundreds of his photographs of historic houses and sites throughout North Castle to The Society. During his tenure the first issue of North Castle History was published. He advocated the purchase of Historic Smith’s Tavern and worked hard to make it a reality.

Pete joined the Armonk Rotary Club in 1964, and served as president of that club. He was a director of the Oneonta, New York Rotary Club.

He and Claudia retired to Maryland, New York in 1980. There he continued to enjoy his hobbies, as well as working with the Town of Maryland Planning Commission.

¹ Reported incorrectly in North Castle History, 1991, Volume 18, p. 27.

Pete and Claudia's children, whom he loved dearly, are Carol McVeigh and her husband, Michael of Irvine, California, Donald Welling and his wife, Lynne of Somers, New York and James Welling and his wife, April of Phoenix, Arizona. He and Claudia have 11 grandchildren. He was predeceased by his brother, William Welling.

A service celebrating his life was held Saturday, December 4, 2010 at the Grummons Funeral Home in Oneonta, New York. Inurnment is at the Ferncliff Cemetery, Hartsdale, New York.



We remember Pete as a sincere, hard working, caring and giving person. Although he and Claudia moved from North Castle more than 30 years ago, we remember them fondly. We are forever grateful to Pete for his numerous contributions to The North Castle Historical Society.

Do Not Stand at My Grave and Weep

by Mary Elizabeth Frye

Do not stand at my grave and weep, I am not there, I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow. I am the diamond glint on snow.

I am the sunlight on ripened grain. I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you wake in the morning hush, I am the swift, uplifting rush
of quiet birds in circling flight. I am the soft starlight at night.

FACES AND PLACES FROM THE PAST

by Doris Finch Watson, North Castle Town Historian

A picture on the cover of the 2007 issue of North Castle History sparked a number of interesting comments. It was a view of Brooker's Maple Shade, a small roadside food stand that stood on Armonk's Main Street in the 1930s. Erling J. (Bumpy) Taylor commented that he remembered that little "hot dog stand" and that Fred Brooker, the owner, lived in the house behind it. It was located where Hickory and Tweed is located today. Bumpy also said he remembered Mr. Brooker's "gin mill". When the article was published, we did not have a picture of it, so just the roadside stand picture was used.

Ahead to 2009: The oldest grandchild of Mr. Brooker, Constance McCoy Marcinek, contacted me from her home in Florida. She explained that her mother was Mr. Brooker's only daughter, and she shared many interesting thoughts about her grandfather, who was born in England. She agreed to send me a photograph of his "gin mill" known as Brooker's Old Town Tavern. It shows her grandfather behind the long bar with fully-stocked liquor shelves as a background. The menu and prices on the left side of the bar included "Clam Chowder" and various sandwiches. The prices appear to all be 15 cents. The right side of the photograph shows half of a potbellied stove. The ceiling appears to have a hornet's nest attached. The picture was used as a Christmas card sending out good wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

If you have pictures from yesteryear, please share copies of them with The Historical Society. Old photographs often mean good stories.



Collection of Doris Finch Watson

BROOKER'S OLD TOWN TAVERN, 1930s

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The North Castle Historical Society is not responsible for the accuracy of statements and signed articles.

THE MARTIN HOUSE “RIVER HILLS”

The Martin House (present-day 14 Mianus River Road) has a long history dating back to the late 1700s. It is believed that the Smith family first occupied the house.

By 1858 the Downs family lived in the house, and the 1881 Bromley map of North Castle indicates “W. Downs” was living there.

Whitlock’s 1901 map of North Castle identifies the residence as “R. Martin”. By 1908, Samuel Martin was living in the house. Richard Miller’s oral history included in this issue relates that in 1903 his family moved from Banksville to live with his maternal grandparents, the Martins.

According to family papers Dorothy and William Bradford Hubbell bought “River Hills” in 1933. Dot Hubbell continued to live in the house until she built a new house next door. Anne Hubbell French lived there from 1942 until 1985.

The photograph on the front cover shows the house before the Hubbells made additions and alterations. The photographs on page 10 of this issue show two views of the house in 1976 after the additions and alterations.

Please forward any corrections or additions to the information presented herein and/or your constructive suggestions for improving this publication to your editorial board at The North Castle Historical Society, Historic Smith’s Tavern, 440 Bedford Road, Armonk, New York 10504. If you would be willing to research and/or author an article, please let us know. Different writers and diverse perspectives are vital. We would appreciate hearing from you.

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